

## CHAPTER 27

### *Al-Naml: The Naml*

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 *sections*; 93 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the mention in verse 18 of a tribe known as the *Naml* in connection with Sulaimân's march against the Queen of Sheba. For the date of revelation and its relation to the preceding chapter, see the introductory note on the last chapter.

The Qur'ân is the word of Allâh, which the Holy Prophet received from on high, just as Mûsâ received a call at Mount Sinai, and the enemies of the former would be dealt with even as those of the latter. This is the substance of the first section. The second and third are devoted to Sulaimân's history, wherein the Holy Prophet's future greatness is indicated. It is really a part of Mûsâic history, for the Isrâ'îlite kingdom attained its full glory under Sulaimân, and Mûsâ passed away before any Isrâ'îlî kingdom was established. On the other hand, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad was destined to combine prophetic greatness with kingship, the glory of Sulaimân with the lowliness of Mûsâ. In his lifetime he was recognized as the king of Arabia, yet, notwithstanding his being crowned with kingly glory, he led a life of marked simplicity. The rest of the chapter is taken up with a brief reference, in the fourth section, to the histories of Ṣâliḥ and Lût, whose opponents were destroyed, and the fifth may be regarded as the natural sequel that the faithful shall be exalted. The sixth section states, however, that the Prophet's triumph was not to be marked by the utter destruction of his enemies, as in the case of these prophets, but by the ultimate spiritual resurrection of those who seemed to be quite deaf, dumb, and dead. That none but the great opponents would pass away is shown in the last section.

#### SECTION 1: A Reference to Mûsâ's History

In the name of Allâh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

**1 Tâ Sîn** - These are the verses of the Qur'ân and the Book that makes manifest:

**2** A guidance and good news for the believers,

**3** Who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and they are sure of the Hereafter.

**4** Those who believe not in the Hereafter, We make their deeds fair-seeming to them, but they blindly wander on.<sup>a</sup>

**5** These are they for whom is an evil chastisement, and in the Hereafter they are the greatest losers.

**6** And you are surely made to receive the Qur'ân from the Wise, the Knowing.

**7** When Mûsâ said to his family: Surely I see a fire; I will bring you news thence, or bring you there-from a burning brand, so that you may warm yourselves.

**8** So when he came to it, a voice issued, saying: Blessed is he who is in search of fire and those around it. And glory be to Allâh, the *Rabb* of the worlds!<sup>a</sup>

**4a.** By *their deeds* are meant the deeds which they ought to perform. Evil deeds are made fair-seeming to evildoers by the *shaitân* (6:43), while Allâh commends good deeds. Elsewhere: "But Allâh has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you disbelief and transgression and disobedience" (49:7).

**8a.** The words *man fî-l-nâr* has been explained in a number of ways. The best explanation is that in which the word *fî* (lit., *in*) may be rendered as meaning *after* or *in search of*. Thus one of the explanations of the phrase given by *Bahr al-Muhîṭ* (Commentary), by Imâm Athîr al-Dîn Abû 'Abd Allâh Abû *Ḥayyân* al-Undlusî is *he who is in the place or follows the direction in which the fire appears to him to be burning*, so that the meaning is that Mûsâ was blessed as also those who lived in this land. *Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn *Râzî* says Mûsâ may be said to be *f i-l-nâr*, because of his *nearness* to the fire, for he says that *one who is very near a thing is spoken of as being in it*. According to another commentator, the meaning is, *he who is in search of it and after it*. Still another explanation is that by *man* is meant *that* or *what*, and the place where fire was seen by Mûsâ to be burning is meant. The addition of the words *those (or whatever is) around it* is to show that the whole of this land was blessed, because so many prophets for the guidance of humanity were raised there.

That the fire was not a physical fire is suggested by commentators. This is in fact clear. The voice that came to Mûsâ was the voice of Allâh and it came in the manner in

which the Divine call comes to all prophets. Mûsâ received a Divine revelation, and what he saw was in a state of transformation.

**9** O Mûsâ, surely I am Allâh, the Mighty, the Wise:

**10** And cast down your rod. So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating and did not return. O Mûsâ, fear not. Surely the messengers fear not in My presence —

**11** Nor he who does wrong, then does good instead after evil;<sup>a</sup> surely I am Forgiving, Merciful,

**12** And put your hand into your bosom, it will come forth white without evil; among nine signs to Pharaoh and his people.<sup>a</sup> Surely they are a transgressing people.

**13** So when Our clear signs came to them, they said: This is clear enchantment.

**14** And they denied them unjustly and proudly, while their *nafs* were convinced of them. See, then, what was the end of the mischief-makers!

**11a.** The word *illâ* with which this verse opens is here equivalent to *wâw* (i.e., *and*) according to Mughnî. But as the negative *lâ* in the previous passage, to which the latter is conjoined, would be regarded as understood after *waw*, hence the correct translation of *illâ* here is *and not* or *nor*. Others consider *illâ* here as introducing a new statement (*Anwâr al-Tanzîl wa Asrâr al-Ta'wîl* (Commentary), by Qâzî Abû Sa'îd 'Abd Allâh ibn 'Umar al-Baidâwî).

**12a.** For the nine signs, see 7:133b.

## SECTION 2: History of Sulaimân

**15** And certainly We gave knowledge to Dâwûd and Sulaimân.<sup>a</sup> And they said: Praise be to Allâh, Who has made us excel many of His believing servants!

**16** And Sulaimân was Dâwûd's heir, and he said: O people, we have been taught the speech of birds,<sup>a</sup> and we have been granted of all things.<sup>b</sup> Surely this is manifest grace.

**17** And his hosts of the *jinn* (i.e., the evil leaders) and the (ordinary) people and the birds were gathered to Sulaimân, and they were formed into groups.<sup>a</sup>

**15a.** The history of Dâwûd and Sulaimân, being the history of the temporal greatness of the Isrâ'îlites, forms really a part of the history of Mûsâ, and reference to it is really prophetic, to show that Islâm was also destined to rise to greatness temporally as well as religiously.

**16a.** The root word *nutq*, from which the word *manṭiq* is derived, signifies originally *articulate speech* or *jointed voices uttered by the tongue and kept by the ears* (*Al-Mufradât fî Ḡharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain *al-Râghib* al-Isfahânî). Its use with regard to other than human beings is looked upon as a kind of metaphor, and the use of the word is allowable when one understands the significance, though it may not be articulate speech (*Al-Mufradât fî Ḡharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain *al-Râghib* al-Isfahânî). Sulaimân's understanding of the speech of birds may imply the use he made of birds in conveying messages from one place to another, these messages being metaphorically called the speech of birds. See also next footnote. The reference here is to the great resources of Sulaimân's kingdom in his victorious marches against near and distant enemies. Note also that Sulaimân does not speak of himself alone; his people are included when he is made to say: *We have been taught*. This shows that his people also knew that speech.

**16b.** By *all things* are meant *all things pertaining to the needs of a strong kingdom*.

**17a.** The hosts of Sulaimân are here divided into three classes, the *jinn*, the ordinary people, and the *ṭair*. As regards the *jinn*, it has been shown in 21:82a that these were men belonging to certain mountain tribes whom Sulaimân had subjugated. *Ṭair* may mean either *birds* or *horse*, i.e., cavalry. The gathering together of all three classes and their division into groups shows that all three were human beings. The word *ṭair*, or *ṭa'ir*, is derived from *ṭâra*, which indicates *it flew*, and is applied not only to birds, but "is also said of other things than those which have wings" (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). *Ṭa'ir* signifies *flying thing*, and as the root word applies to other than winged beings, *ṭa'ir*, of which *ṭair* (the word used here) is a plural, may also be applied to *swift animals such as horses*. Thus *ṭayyâr*, which is an intensive form of *ṭa'ir*, signifies, when standing alone, *a sharp, spirited, vigorous horse that is almost made to fly by reason of the vehemence of its running* (*Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by Imâm Muḥibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faïd Murtadâ and the *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). It

also means *a company of men* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). *Tayyûr*, which is another intensive form of the nominative *tâ'ir*, signifies *a man who is sharp and quick* (*Al-Qâmûs al-Muhîṭ* (Dictionary), by Shaikh Majd al-Dîn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qûb Al-Firozâbâdî and the *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). Thus the context taken in the light of these explanations would justify the conclusion that *tair* here means *horse*, i.e., *cavalry*, because it could be moved quickly. This is corroborated by the statement regarding Sulaimân's love of horses in 38:31–33. But it may be added that the use of birds in conveying messages made the birds a necessary adjunct to a military expedition, and hence the word may also be taken literally as meaning *birds*.

**18** Until when they came to the valley of the Naml,<sup>a</sup> a Namlite said: O Naml, enter your houses, (lest) Sulaimân and his hosts crush you, while they know not.

**19** So he smiled, wondering<sup>a</sup> at her word, and said: My *Rabb*, grant me that I may be grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good such as You are pleased with, and admit me, by Your mercy, among Your righteous servants.

**20** And he reviewed the birds, then said: How is it I see not Hudhud, or is it that he is one of the absentees?<sup>a</sup>

**18a.** Many of the fables regarding Sulaimân have been due to a misconception of the word *naml*. It should be noted that *wâdi-l-Naml* cannot be properly translated as the *valley of the ants*, for *Naml* is a proper noun, and according to *Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muḥibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faiḍ Murtaḍâ* (see under the root *wady*), the valley of the Naml is situated between Jibrîn and 'Asqalân. And *Namlah* is the name of a tribe, like *Mâzin*, which literally signifies *the eggs of the ants*. *Namil* means *a clever man* (*Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muḥibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faiḍ Murtaḍâ*). The name *Namlah* used also to be given to a child in whose hands an ant was placed at its birth, because it was said such a child would be wise and intelligent (*Tâj al-'Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muḥibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faiḍ Murtaḍâ*). And the *Namlah* are plainly spoken of as a tribe in the *Qâmûs*, which says under the word *barq*, *Abriqah is of the waters of Namlah*.

**19a.** *Dâhik* means *wondering*, for *dihk* is used as well for simple *joy* as for simple *wonder* (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l- Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî). See also the *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane, which says *dahaka* signifies also *he wondered*, synonym '*ajiba*.

**20a.** The opening words may mean either a review of birds or a review of horses; see 17a. By *Hudhud* is not to be understood the *lapwing*, but *a person of that name*. In every language many of the proper names given to men will be found to be identical with the names of animals. The Arab writers speak of a king of Himyar as *Hudad* (*Lisân al- 'Arab* (Dictionary), by 'Allâmah Abu-l-Faḍl Jamâl al-Dîn Muḥammad ibn Mukarram), which is almost identical with *Hudhud* mentioned in the Qur'ân. The Holy man-made Bible speaks of a king of Syria, named Ben Hadad (1 Kings 15:18, etc.). The *Muntaha-l-arab* states that Hudhad was the name of the father of Balqîs, the queen of Sheba. According to *Lisân al- 'Arab* (Dictionary), by 'Allâmah Abu-l-Faḍl Jamâl al-Dîn Muḥammad ibn Mukarram, Hudhud is also written as Hudâhad, and Hudâhad and Hadad was the name of a tribe in Yaman. This shows that there is nothing strange in such a name being given to men. The verses that follow show clearly that Sulaimân was speaking of one of his own officers: the infliction of severe punishment on a small bird by such a mighty monarch, as Solomon, and the exposition of the great religious doctrine of Unity by the lapwing, are quite incomprehensible.

**21** I will certainly punish him with a severe punishment, or kill him, or he shall bring me a clear excuse.

**22** And he tarried not long, then said: I have compassed that which you have not compassed and I have come to you from Saba' with sure information<sup>a</sup>—

**23** I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything and she has a mighty throne.

**24** I found her and her people adoring the sun instead of Allâh, and the *shaitân* has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and turned them from the way, so they go not aright —

**25** So that they worship not Allâh, Who brings forth what is hidden in the *samâwât* and the earth and knows what you hide and what you proclaim.

**26** Allâh, there is no Deity but He, the *Rabb* of the mighty Throne.<sup>a</sup>

## **Prostration**

**27** He said: We shall see whether you speak the truth or whether you are a liar.

**28** Take this my letter and hand it over to them, then turn from them and see what (answer) they return.

**29** She said: O chiefs, an honourable letter has been delivered to me.

**30** It is from Sulaimân, and it is I seek the assistance of Allâh the Beneficent Creator the Merciful bounty giver:

**22a.** *Saba* ' is the same as the Sheba of the Holy man-made Bible. The story as given here is not met with in the Bible, but it was known to Jewish rabbis. The Bible speaks of the coming of the queen of Sheba to Solomon with large presents to test him. See 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chronicles 9. And later on it speaks of many strange women as Solomon's wives (1 Kings 11).

**26a.** The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 7:206a.

**31** Proclaiming, Exalt not yourselves against me and come to me in submission.

## **SECTION 3: History of Sulaimân**

**32** She said: O chiefs, advise me respecting my affair; I never decide an affair until you are in my presence.

**33** They said: We are possessors of strength and possessors of mighty prowess. And the command is thine, so consider what thou wilt command.

**34** She said: Surely the kings, when they enter a town, ruin it and make the noblest of its people to be low; and thus they do.

**35** And surely I am going to send them a present, and to see what (answer) the messengers bring back.

**36** So when (the envoy) came to Sulaimân, he said: Will you help me with wealth? But what Allâh has given me is better than that which He has given you. Nay, you are exultant because of your present.<sup>a</sup>

**37** Go back to them, so we shall certainly come to them with hosts which they have no power to oppose, and we shall certainly expel them there-from in disgrace, while they are abased.

**38** He said: O chiefs, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission?<sup>a</sup>

**36a.** Why was Sulaimân angry on receiving a present from the queen? Later events, as narrated further on, show that the present sent to Sulaimân was a throne which was decorated either with nude art or with idolatrous paintings, or was offensive in some other way. Sulaimân's order in verse 38 to bring *her throne* to him shows clearly that by it was meant the throne which she had sent to him as a present, and his order in verse 41 to make alterations in this throne shows that the paintings on the throne were abhorrent to a true worshipper of Allâh.

**39** One audacious among the *jinn* said: I will bring it to you before you rise up from your place; and surely I am strong, trusty for it.<sup>a</sup>

**40** One having knowledge of the Book said: I will bring it to thee in the twinkling of an eye.<sup>a</sup> Then when he saw it settled beside him,<sup>b</sup> he said: This is of the grace of my Lord, that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own *nafs*, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my *Rabb* is Self-sufficient, Bountiful.

**41** He said: Alter her throne for her; we may see whether she follows the right way or is of those who go not aright.<sup>a</sup>

**38a.** As usual, the narrative here omits the return of the messengers to the queen, and her willingness to submit to Sulaimân on receiving the threat mentioned in the last verse, and continues at the point where Sulaimân makes preparations to receive her. By *her throne* is meant the throne which she had sent as a present.

**39a.** The *rising up from the place* does not signify his standing up from the sitting posture, but his marching away from the place where he was at the time. The reference to being trusty shows that the execution of the work required an honest worker. The audacious *jinni* is apparently one of the Amalekites, who were men of large stature.



**40a.** By *one having knowledge of the Book* is meant an Isrâ'îlite as against the Amalekite referred to in the previous verses. The literal meaning of the concluding words of the sentence is, *before thy gaze returns to thee*. It is the same as *in the twinkling of an eye*; the idea conveyed being that he could do it without delay.

**40b.** Strange and curious legends are introduced by some commentators on the supposition that the events narrated took place in immediate succession. The words *so when he saw it settled beside him* do not indicate that he saw it settled in the course of the conversation given in the previous passage. It is an altogether different incident.

**41a.** As pointed out in 36a, Sulaimân was offended by the throne which the queen sent him as a present because of the indecent or idolatrous paintings on it, and therefore before she came to him, he caused certain alterations to be made in the throne. The purpose of the alteration is given here in express words, *whether she follows the right way*. In fact, she seems to have invited Sulaimân in the symbolic language of the paintings on the throne to her religion of idolatry, and by making alterations Sulaimân indicated that he could not make a compromise with idolatry.

**42** So when she came, it was said: Was your throne like this? She said: It is as it were the same; and we were given the knowledge before about it, and we submitted.<sup>a</sup>

**43** And that which she worshipped besides Allâh prevented her; for she was of a disbelieving people.

**44** It was said to her: Enter the palace. But when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water, and prepared herself to meet the difficulty.<sup>a</sup> He said: Surely it is a palace made smooth with glass.<sup>b</sup> She said: My *Rabb*, surely I have wronged myself, and I submit with Sulaimân to Allâh, the *Rabb* of the worlds.<sup>c</sup>

**42a.** By putting the question, *was your throne like this?* Sulaimân wanted to draw her attention pointedly to the alterations made. The queen's answer shows that her envoy had already told her that Sulaimân was offended by the present which she had sent — *we were given the knowledge before about it*. The submission referred to in the act of surrendering her kingdom does not mean that she had turned a Muslim. This is made clear in verse 43; she was prevented from becoming a true Muslim owing to her worship of the sun. Hence submission to Allâh comes later; see the concluding words of verse 44.

**44a.** The use of the word *sâq* to signify *difficulty* or *distress* in many phrases is a commonplace of Arabic literature and only crass ignorance of the Arabic language would make anyone adopt the literal significance of the word *sâq* (i.e., *shank*) in the face of the recognized idiomatic uses of the word. *Al-kashf* ‘*ani-l-sâq* is a well-known idiom, and refers to a man when difficulty befalls him — meaning *he prepared himself for the difficulty* — “they mention the *sâq* when they mean to express the difficulty of a case or an event, and to tell of the terror occasioned thereby” (*Tâj al-‘Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muhibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faid Murtaḍâ* and the *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). Thus the statement in 68:42, *yauma yukshafu ‘an sâq-in*, means *on a day when difficulty or calamity shall be disclosed* (‘*Abd Allâh ibn ‘Abbâs* (Companion)). And similarly, *qâmati-l-harbu ‘alâ sâq-in* signifies *the battle became vehement* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). See also 68:42a, where it is shown that the commentators attach the same significance to these words.

**44b.** Sulaimân was a wealthy king and he had undoubtedly his palaces. It appears that, in order to impress upon the queen that it was the unseen hand of Allâh that worked in nature; he made water to flow under the smooth glass floor. Thus he conveyed to her the message that Allâh was the real force behind all in symbolic language, as she had conveyed to him the message of idolatry in the symbolic language of the throne which she had sent him as a present. The queen mistook the glass for the water which ran beneath; and when Sulaimân drew her attention to it, she at once realized her own error in worshipping outward objects, like the sun, while the real force or the source of life was Allâh, Whose hand worked in these objects. Perhaps in words, too, he impressed on her the great message of Divine Unity. The result was that the queen accepted the way of life as prescribed by Allâh of Sulaimân — *I submit with Sulaimân to Allâh, the Rabb of the worlds*.

#### SECTION 4: Sâlih and Lût

**45** And certainly We sent to Thamûd their brother Sâlih, saying: Serve Allâh. Then lo! They became two parties, contending.

**46** He said: O my people, why do you hasten on the evil before the good? Why do you not ask forgiveness of Allâh so that you may have mercy?

**47** They said: We augur evil of you and those with you. He said: Your evil augury is with Allâh; nay, you are a people who are tried.

**48** And there were in the city nine persons who made mischief in the land and did not act aright.<sup>a</sup>

**49** They said: Swear one to another by Allâh that we shall attack him and his family by night, then we shall say to his heir: We witnessed not the destruction of his family, and we are surely truthful.<sup>a</sup>

**44c.** In this the Qur'ân contradicts the Holy man-made Bible, the latter holding that Sulaimân had gone over to idol-worship on account of his non-Isrâ'îlitish wives, while the Qur'ân states that his wives were converts to his religion and believers in Divine Unity. Higher criticism of the Bible upholds the Qur'ânic view; see 2:102*d*.

**48a.** There is no doubt a reference here to the enemies of the Holy Prophet, the chief of them being nine in number, eight of whom were slain at Badr, the exception was Abû Lahab, who died at Makkah on hearing the news of the defeat at Badr. Their names were Abû Jahl, Muṭ'im ibn 'Adiyy, Shaibah ibn Rabî'ah, 'Utbah ibn Rabî'ah, Walîd ibn 'Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalf, Nadar ibn al-Harth, 'Aqbah ibn Abî Mu'aiṭ and Abû Lahab.

**49a.** There seems to be a prophetic reference here to the plot against the Holy Prophet, for the same plan was ultimately agreed upon by the Quraish to do away with him. It should be borne in mind that the revelation of this chapter belongs to an early period. The plot against the Prophet's life was to have been executed in the following manner: One man from every tribe of the Quraish was selected, who should take the Prophet unawares. They were to thrust their swords into his body simultaneously so that no particular tribe could be held guilty. This was agreed upon immediately before the Prophet's flight to Madînah, and thus the incident as relating to Sâlih is meant as a prophecy.

**50** And they planned a plan, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not.

**51** See, then, what was the end of their plan, that We destroyed them and their people, all (of them).

**52** So those are their houses fallen down because they were iniquitous. Surely there is a sign in this for a people who know.

**53** And We delivered those who believed and kept their duty.

**54** And Lût, when he said to his people: Do you commit foul deeds, while you see?

**55** Will you come to men lustfully rather than women? Nay, you are a people who act ignorantly.

**56** But the answer of his people was naught except that they said: Drive out Lût's followers from your town; surely they are a people who would keep pure!

**57** But We delivered him and his followers except his wife; We ordained her to be of those who remained behind.

**58** And We rained on them a rain; so evil was the rain on those who had been warned.<sup>a</sup>

## SECTION 5: The Faithful will be Exalted

**59** Say: Praise be to Allâh and peace on His servants whom He has chosen! Is Allâh better, or what they associate (with Him)?

**58a.** Stones were rained on them; see 7:84a.

## Part 20

**60** Or, Who created the *samâwât* and the earth, and sends down for you water from the cloud? Then We cause to grow thereby beautiful gardens — it is not possible for you to make the trees thereof to grow. Is there a deity with Allâh? Nay, they are a people who deviate!

**61** Or, Who made the earth a resting-place, and made in it rivers, and raised on it mountains, and placed between the two seas a barrier?<sup>a</sup> Is there a god with Allâh? Nay, most of them know not!

**62** Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and will make you successors in the earth?<sup>a</sup> Is there a god with Allâh? Little is it that you mind!

**63** Or, Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as good news before His mercy? Is there a god with Allâh? Exalted be Allâh above what they associate (with Him)!

**61a.** See 25:53a.

**62a.** The manifestation of the marvellous power of Allâh in nature, the creation of the *samâwât* and the earth, the sending down of rain, the making of rivers and mountains — all these wonderful signs of the existence of the Great Creator are here followed by another equally wonderful sign of the existence of Allâh, the manifestation of His marvellous power in human beings. But mark the contrast. This manifestation of the existence of Allâh is not to be sought in the greatness and power of human beings as the conqueror of the forces of nature, but in his weakness in his great distress when, unable to find help from any source; he throws himself on the Divine threshold and seeks help from Allâh. We are thus told that the manifestation of Allâh's great power in the mighty forces of nature is as clear an indication of the existence of Allâh as the manifestation of His power in a weak mortal who finds himself in extreme distress. But what is more, this manifestation of Allâh's power is beautifully mingled with prophecy — *and He will make you successors in the earth*. The distressed ones here are no other than the Muslims, who were being cruelly persecuted and tortured, and they are told that the manifestation of Allâh's power in making them rulers of the earth would be as great as it was in His creation of the *samâwât* and the earth. This also shows the purpose underlying the narration of the histories of Dâwûd and Sulaimân.

**64** Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and Who gives you sustenance from the *samâ'* and the earth? Is there a deity with Allâh? Say: Bring your proof, if you are truthful.

**65** Say: No one in the *samâwât* and the earth knows the unseen but Allâh; and they know not when they will be raised.

**66** Nay, their knowledge reaches not the Hereafter. Nay, they are in doubt about it. Nay, they are blind to it.<sup>a</sup>

## SECTION 6: The Religious Resurrection

**67** And those who disbelieve say: When we have become dust and our fathers (too), shall we indeed be brought forth?

**68** We have certainly been promised this — we and our fathers before; these are naught but stories of the ancients!

**69** Say: Travel in the earth, then see what was the end of the guilty!

**70** And grieve not for them, nor be distressed because of what they plan.

**71** And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you are truthful?

**72** Say: Maybe somewhat of that which you seek to hasten has drawn nigh to you.

**66a.** Human knowledge cannot reach the life after death and Allâh has vouchsafed this knowledge to man through His revelation. But men are in doubt about it; in fact, they shut their eyes to it.

**73** And surely your *Rabb* is Full of grace to human beings, but most of them do not give thanks.

**74** And surely your *Rabb* knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest.

**75** And there is nothing concealed in the *samâ'* and the earth but it is in a clear book.

**76** Surely this Qur'ân declares to the Children of Isrâ'îl most of that wherein they differ.

**77** And surely it is guidance and a mercy for the believers.

**78** Truly your *Rabb* will judge between them by His judgment, and He is the Mighty, the Knowing.

**79** So rely on Allâh. Surely you are on the plain truth.

**80** Certainly you can not make the dead to hear, nor can you make the deaf to hear the call, when they go back retreating.<sup>a</sup>

**81** Nor can you lead the blind out of their error. You can make none to hear except those who believe in Our messages, so they submit.

**82** And when the word comes to pass against them, We shall bring forth for them a creature from the earth that will speak to them, because people did not believe in Our messages.<sup>a</sup>

**80a.** This verse is a clear testimony to what is meant by the Prophet's raising the dead; for here we are told that, if the dead go back retreating, the Prophet cannot make them hear. Evidently this verse and the opening words of the following verse speak of the reprobate who shut their eyes and close their ears to all truth.

**82a.** By the *creature from the earth that will speak to them* are evidently meant people who are bent low upon earth. These people are the materialistic nations of the West who have lost all sense of the higher values of life. The coming forth of the *dâbbat al-ard* is one of the signs of the approach of the Hour according to the Hadîth. But the Hour may mean either the Day of Judgment or the doom of a people, and this verse gives us an indication that the Hour in this case stands for the doom of a nation; because here it is spoken of as being a punishment for not believing in the Divine messages.

### SECTION 7: Passing away of Opposition

**83** And the day when We gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected Our messages, then they will be formed into groups.

**84** Until, when they come, He will say: Did you reject My messages, while you did not comprehend them in knowledge? Or what was it that you did?

**85** And the word will come to pass against them because they were unjust, so they will not speak.

**86** See they not that We have made the night that they may rest therein, and the day to give light? Surely there are signs in this for a people who believe.

**87** And the day when the trumpet is blown, then those in the *samâwât* and those in the earth will be struck with terror, except such as Allâh please. And all shall come to Him abased.<sup>a</sup>

**88** And you see the mountains — you think them firmly fixed — passing away as the passing away of the cloud: the handiwork of Allâh, Who has made everything thoroughly. Surely He is Aware of what you do.<sup>a</sup>

**87a.** As a foretaste of what was in store for the rejectors of the Truth; the prophecy was also brought to fulfilment in this life. The whole of Arabia recognized the Holy Prophet as its temporal and spiritual head, and the proud opponents were abased.

**88a.** That *jabal* signifies a *great man* has been shown in 13:31a. That in the passing away of the mountains there is a clear reference to the removal of the mighty men who opposed

the Prophet's preaching is also shown by the concluding words of the verse, which clearly speak of the punishment of the evil deeds by One Who is Aware of what they do.

**89** Whoever brings good, he will have better than it; and they will be secure from terror that day.

**90** And whoever brings evil, these will be thrown down on their faces into the Fire. Are you rewarded aught except for what you did?

**91** I am commanded only to serve the *Rabb* of this city, Who has made it sacred, and His are all things,<sup>a</sup> and I am commanded to be of those who submit,

**92** And to recite the Qur'ân. So whoever goes aright, he goes aright for his own *nafs*, and whoever goes astray — say: I am only one of the warners.

**93** And say: Praise be to Allâh! He will show you His signs so that you shall recognize them. And your *Rabb* is not heedless of what you do.<sup>a</sup>

**91a.** The statement here that the Prophet is commanded to serve *the Rabb of the city of Makkah* contains an allusion that the servant of the *Rabb* will be the lord of that city.

**93a.** Mark the firmness of the tone in which the showing of signs is asserted.